

EDITORIAL

We are all concerned with the timeliness of publications and thus, the efficiency of the publication process and are pleased to note that the AMS has made major progress this year in reducing the editing and production time cycle for *JPO* from 7 to about 5 months as the backlog of manuscripts temporarily waiting to enter the cue has been reduced from as many as 70 to an acceptable level of 20. The unusually large number of titles in recent Papers to Appear is evidence of the success of their efforts.

Now it is time to turn our attention to other aspects of the publication process. There are numerous opportunities for the process to bog down with the authors, reviewers, and editors. For example, it is important for authors to follow the AMS Author's Guide (*Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, Vol. 73, No. 8, August 1992) in preparing and submitting their manuscript(s). In particular they should be submitted

- double-spaced
- one-sided
- with separate title and abstract pages
- at least three copies (of the original and revised manuscript.)
- with reference to the manuscript number (editor's during review, AMS's during production) in correspondence and other communications.

Failure to follow the guidelines can only result in otherwise avoidable delay. It is surprisingly common that proofreading has been inadequate, and that the grammar and style have not been carefully checked.

There are positive steps that can be taken by authors to expedite the review process. For example, addition of captions to figures and insertion of figures at logical junctures in the text lighten the reviewers' task. Also, detailed and forthright itemized responses to each point made by the reviewers facilitates the second round of review by reviewers and the editor. It is essential that no issues be ignored though they may be disregarded if a logical rationale is provided.

Reviewers are of course crucial to the process. Penetrating, thorough, and constructively critical reviews are the most useful. It helps if reviewers carefully enumerate their points. Managing the "reviewer burden" is one of the editor's most difficult tasks. In order to minimize the distraction to the community, we have tended to seek only two reviews; however, that makes us vulnerable to the tardy reviewer. We need cooperation from reviewers in responding to us promptly if they will not be able to provide a timely review. Otherwise, we will have to revert increasingly to seeking three reviews from the outset. Some reviewers are more frequently engaged because of their unselfish and proven competent performance, for which we are grateful. If there are people who feel under-utilized as reviewers, please inform us of your name, address, telephone number, e-mail addresses, and areas of expertise. Reviewing is not only an important professional activity, it often offers a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and views with one's colleagues in a non-confrontational format.

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